Public Policy Institute of California

California Counts
POPULATION TRENDS AND PROFILES

Hans P. Johnson, editor

Volume 4 Number 4 • May 2003

Latinos and Racial Identification in California

By Sonya M. Tafoya

Summary

This issue of *California Counts* explores how Latinos, in both California and the rest of the nation, identify with the standard racial groups defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and used by the U.S. Census Bureau. According to these standards, Latinos are an ethnic group and may be of any race. To a greater extent than non-Latinos, however, Latinos opt out of the standard racial categories, either by categorizing themselves as "some other race" or, to a lesser extent, by failing to answer the race question altogether. Results from the 2000 Census indicate that over 5.5 million California residents were categorized as "some other race" and that 99 percent of these respondents were Latinos. Simply by virtue of their response, a large segment of the Latino population fashioned the "some other race" residual category into a de facto Latino racial category.

This conflation of race and ethnicity is not without parallel. The civil rights bureaucracy has treated "Spanish Americans" as a group coequal with other racial groups. Moreover, California state agencies use a categorization system that treats Hispanic ethnicity as coequal with the five standard racial groups. In the long run, these practices and Latino responses to questions about race may lead to changes in the federal racial and ethnic classification system.

Sonya M. Tafoya is a research associate at the Public Policy Institute of California.

The author acknowledges the helpful comments and thoughtful reviews of Hans Johnson, David Harris, Elias Lopez, Deborah Reed, Belinda Reyes, Joyce Peterson, and Peter Richardson. Views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of PPIC.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Responses to the 2000 Census ... suggest that many Latinos do not feel that [OMB] standard categories reflect their racial identity.

Introduction

According to the OMB, the agency responsible for issuing U.S. Census Bureau standards, Latinos are an ethnic group and may be of any race. For purposes of federal data collection, however, Latinos constitute a unique ethnic group. They are the only one identified with a specific question: the Hispanic-origin question. That question helps satisfy a 1976 law that requires the collection, analysis, and publication of economic and social statistics on persons of Spanish culture, origin, or descent, regardless of race.[1]

The OMB acknowledges that its racial categories are "socio-political constructs and should not be interpreted as being scientific or anthropological in nature." Because these categories rely on social perceptions of race, the OMB reviews its standards periodically. In a recent review, OMB considered the possibility of combining the currently separate race and Hispanic origins questions into one. The result would have been a combined racial and ethnic question that appended Hispanic or Latino to the list of standard racial categories. Ultimately, the OMB chose to maintain the two-question format on questionnaires such as the 2000 Census.

Responses to the 2000 Census, however, suggest that many Latinos do not feel that these standard categories reflect their racial identity. To a greater extent than non-Latinos, Latinos opt out of the standard racial categories, either by categorizing themselves as "some other race" or, to a lesser extent, by failing to answer the race questions at all. In the 2000 Census, over 5.5 million California residents were categorized as "some other race," and 99 percent of these respondents were Latinos. This subset of Latinos is more numerous than California's African American (2.3 million) and Asian (3.7 million) populations.

This paper seeks to answer four questions about Latino racial identity, especially in California. First, given the federal racial classification scheme, how do California Latinos identify themselves? Second, how have California Latinos been racially identified by others? Third, what do the survey data tell us about how Latinos prefer to be identified? And finally, how are Latinos who identify racially as "white" different from Latinos who identify themselves as "some other race"? The paper concludes with a brief consideration of the effects Latinos may have on the federal racial and ethnic classification system.

How Do California Latinos Respond to the Current Racial Categories?

The foundation for the current federal system of racial and ethnic classification was established when Latinos constituted only a tiny fraction of the nation's population. Although questions have varied from one decennial Census to the next, the most enduring distinctions in what is now termed race were drawn as early as 1870, when enumerators counted whites, blacks, mulattos, Chinese, and Indians (Nobles, 2000).[2] The minimum race and ethnic standards are currently outlined by the OMB in a document entitled "Standards for Maintaining, Collecting and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity." The racial groups specified in that document are

- American Indian or Alaska Native,
- Asian,
- Black or African American,
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander,[3] and
- White.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Some other race" is not an option outlined by the OMB, but it has been used as a residual category in Census questionnaires. For Latinos, the OMB's preferred data collection method consists of two related questions: a Hispanic ethnicity question followed by a race question with the aforementioned racial groups as choices. Figure 1 illustrates the two-question format presented in the 2000 decennial Census schedule.

Given these racial choices, Latinos respond in a variety of ways (Figure 2). In 1980, when the Hispanic origin question was first asked of 100 percent of the population, just over half of all Latinos identified as white, 44 percent selected "some other race," and 3 percent selected another racial category such as Asian, American Indian, or African American (Choldin, 1986). In 1990, fewer Latinos identified as white (46 percent), and 51 percent identified as "some other race." By 2000, only 40 percent of California Latinos identified as white, and the number of Latinos selecting something other than white or "some other race" rose to 9 percent. This change was primarily the result of respondents being allowed for the first time to select more than one race.[4] Although the addition of that option limits the comparability of these results to 1980 and 1990 data, it is clear that roughly 40 to 50 percent of California Hispanics

Figure 1. Reproduction of Questions on Race and Hispanic Origin from Census 2000

→ **NOTE: Please answer BOTH Questions 5 and 6.**

5. Is this person Spanish/Hispanic/Latino? *Mark* ☒ *the "No" box if not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino.*

☐ No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
☐ Yes, Puerto Rican
☐ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
☐ Yes, Cuban
☐ Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino — *Print group.*

6. What is this person's race? *Mark* ☒ *one or more races to indicate what this person considers himself/herself to be.*

☐ White
☐ Black, African Am., or Negro
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native — *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.*

☐ Asian Indian ☐ Japanese ☐ Native Hawaiian
☐ Chinese ☐ Korean ☐ Guamanian or Chamorro
☐ Filipino ☐ Vietnamese ☐ Samoan
☐ Other Asian — *Print race.* ☐ Other Pacific Islander — *Print race.*

☐ Some other race — *Print race.*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 questionnaire.

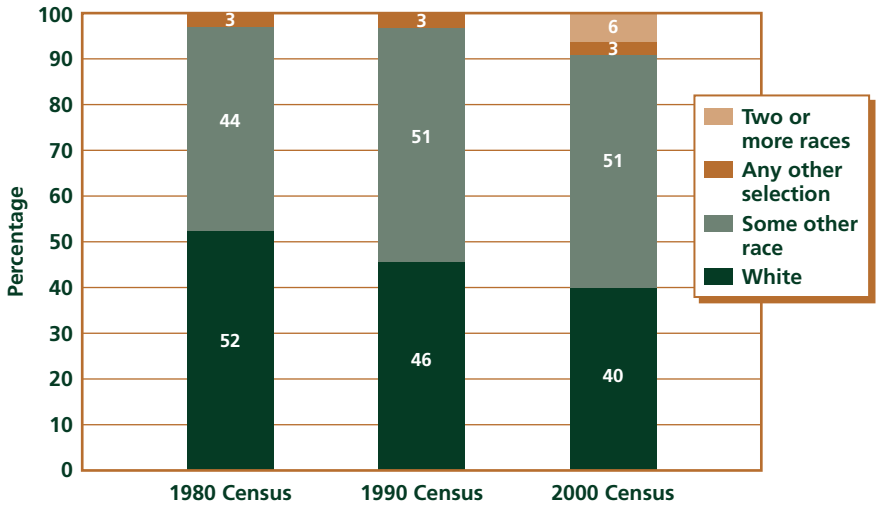
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Many Hispanics reported "some other race" on their Census forms but were more likely to report their race as white in the reinterviews.

prefer the "some other race" response to the race question.

Further examination of Latino responses, however, reveals that the survey's context and format influence the choice of racial categories (Rodriguez, 2000; Hirschman et al., 2000). Whereas the information in Figure 2 suggests that over half of all California Latinos prefer not to designate themselves as white, results from the Census 2000 Supplementary Survey (C2SS) indicate that 64 percent of California Latinos identified as white in 2000 (Figure 3).[5] Figures 1 and 4 illustrate the differences in question format between Census 2000 and C2SS. The inconsistent results from the two surveys may be attributable to question format. Because there was not an exclusive area for selecting "some other race" and then writing in a response on the C2SS questionnaire, Latinos may have been reluctant to write in a response in a space shared by

Figure 2. Racial Identification of California's Hispanic Population from the 1980, 1990, and 2000 Censuses



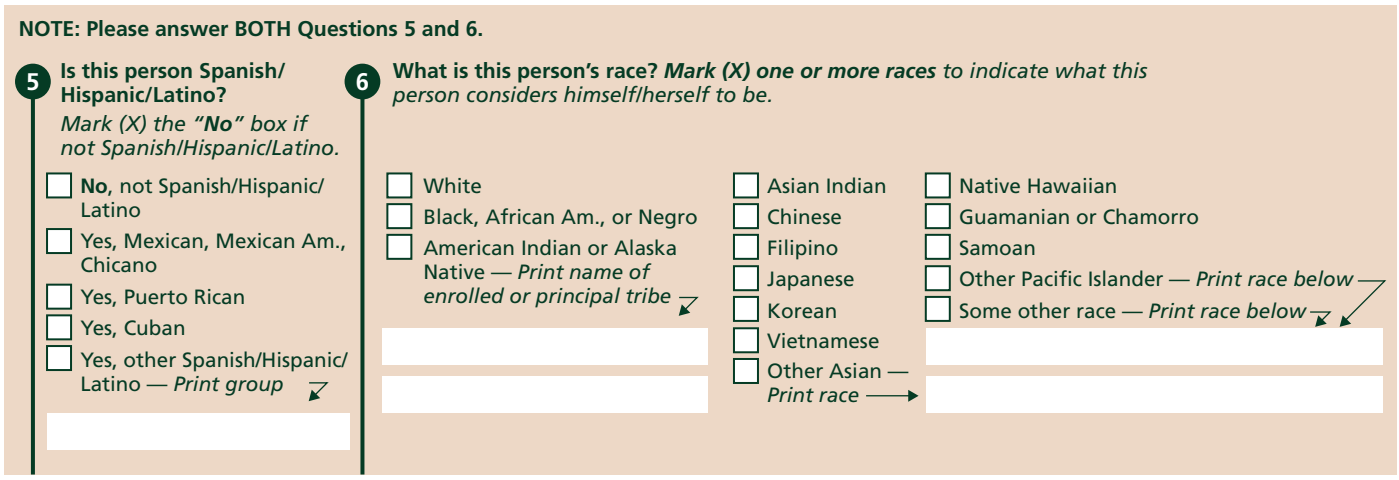
Source: Author's calculations from the 1980 public use microsample (PUMS), 1990 PUMS, and 2000 SF3 Census files.
Note: Numbers may not sum to 100 because of independent rounding.

Figure 3. Racial Identification of California's Hispanic Population from the C2SS and 2000 Census

Source: Author's calculations from the 2000 SF3 Census files and the C2SS.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Figure 4. Reproduction of Questions on Race and Hispanic Origin from the C2SS


NOTE: Please answer BOTH Questions 5 and 6.
5 Is this person Spanish/ Hispanic/Latino?
Mark (X) the "No" box if not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino.
No, not Spanish/Hispanic/ Latino
Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
Yes, Puerto Rican
Yes, Cuban
Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/ Latino — Print group
6 What is this person's race? Mark (X) one or more races to indicate what this person considers himself/herself to be.
White
Black, African Am., or Negro
American Indian or Alaska Native — Print name of enrolled or principal tribe
Asian Indian
Chinese
Filipino
Japanese
Korean
Vietnamese
Other Asian — Print race
Native Hawaiian
Guamanian or Chamorro
Samoan
Other Pacific Islander — Print race below
Some other race — Print race below

Source: C2SS questionnaire.

Other Asians, and Other Pacific Islanders. Similar inconsistencies have also been documented in the 1990 Census and the 1990 Census reinterviews. For example, many Hispanics reported "some other race" on their Census forms but were more likely to report their race as white in the reinterviews (McKenney et al., 1993).[6]

Some Latinos decline to answer the race question. The Census Bureau addresses the problem of item nonresponse by imputing values for missing data. The 1990 data show that 1.14 percent of the U.S. population was allocated to a racial category through the imputation process, and Latino allocation rates are four times as high. In California, the allocation rate that year was 1.85 percent overall and 4.74 percent for Latinos.[7]

How Have Others Racially Categorized California Latinos?

Before 1970, when U.S. Census enumeration was conducted primarily by mail, enumerators played a much larger role in racial identification (Anderson, 1988). In the 1960 Census, for example, enumerators were instructed to mark the appropriate category among "White, Negro, American Indian, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Part Hawaiian, Aleut, Eskimo, etc." For persons of some other race, enumerators were instructed to select "other" and write in a specific entry. The examples included "Korean" and "Hindu." Enumerators were specifically instructed not to mark "other" for persons reported as Mexicans and other persons of Latin American descent. Instead, they were to mark "white" unless the respondent was definitely of Negro, Indian, or another nonwhite race (Nobles, 2000).

Historically, then, Mexicans and others of Latin American descent were generally classified as white. Only the 1930 Census deviated from this pattern.[8] In that Census, "Mexican" was included among the list of nonwhite races along with Negro, Indian, Chinese,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The current inclination among California Latinos to identify as racially "other"—even while the Census Bureau deemed them white—may be partially explained by the pervasiveness of the combined racial and ethnic format commonly used to present trends in California.

Japanese, Filipino, Hindu, Korean, and Other. The enumerators were instructed to select Mexican unless the person was definitely Negro, Indian, Chinese, or Japanese (Nobles, 2000). Both the 1960 and the 1930 examples indicate that the Census Bureau did not intend for Latinos in general, and Mexicans in particular, to identify as "other." Before 1970, when enumerators received instructions on how to complete Census forms, the racial "otherness" of Latinos was apparently not an issue.

The current inclination among California Latinos to identify as racially "other"—even while the Census Bureau deemed them white unless not definitely Negro, Indian, or another nonwhite race—may be partially explained by the pervasiveness of the combined racial and ethnic format commonly used to present trends in California. In fact, most state agencies avoid classifying Latinos racially. Like the Census Bureau, these agencies ask both a Hispanic ethnicity question and a race question; later, however, they aggregate Latinos of all races and present the group alongside the federally accepted racial groups. The Department of Finance, for example, uses this procedure for all population projections.[9] The results of this practice are not unlike those of the 1930 Census.

The Department of Health Services (DHS) also uses a collapsed racial and ethnic format in presenting vital statistics birth data, yet California birth records for 2000 show that the overwhelming majority of Hispanic mothers are classified as racially white. The preponderance of white Hispanics in this dataset results from the DHS tabulation process. Any mother who selects "other please specify" from among the racial categories is reallocated to the white category if she specifies that she is Mexican, Chicano, or Hispanic.[10] Thus, DHS, like the Census Bureau, regards Latinos as white unless not definitely Negro, Indian, or another nonwhite race. Even so, it presents Hispanic/Latino ethnicity as an "other" category coequal with other racial groups.

The conflation of race and ethnicity for Latinos is also evident at the national level. Graham (2002) shows that although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin, it named no specific groups. Long before 1964, however, the nascent civil rights administration was building support for antidiscrimination programs created by executive order. Graham argues that early administrative attempts to monitor the employment practices of firms that had procured government contracts resulted in survey forms that named specific racial and ethnic groups. Once it was known that government forms had identified

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

specific groups, lobbying efforts on behalf of other groups began. Thus, early data collection combined with political lobbying resulted in the designation of five groups: Negro, Spanish American, Oriental, American Indian, and white. For policy purposes, this designation also presents Spanish Americans as a racially nonwhite group.

How Would Latinos Prefer to Identify Themselves?

In a nationally representative survey of Hispanics conducted in 2002, respondents were asked about their racial identity.[11] Answers to a series of questions showed that 76 percent of all Hispanics found that the standard categories used by the U.S. government lie outside their preferences. Over half (56 percent) of respondents volunteered or preferred a racial response of "Hispanic or Latino." Another 20 percent preferred white, and 20 percent preferred another option.[12] Of the remaining 4 percent, half preferred African American and half did not know.

The survey also compared national origin groups and their inclinations to select "Latino" or "Hispanic" rather than "white" as a racial category. Those of Mexican origin, the largest Hispanic subgroup in California, were slightly more likely than all Latinos (58 percent compared to 56 percent) to prefer Latino or Hispanic as a racial identification. Whereas 20 percent of the entire sample preferred to identify as white, 17 percent of the Mexican-origin group preferred to do so. Those of Colombian and Cuban origin were the most likely to prefer a white identification, but neither group is highly represented among California Latinos. A small share of Mexican-origin respondents, 10 percent, indicated that they would like to identify their race as "Mexican or Mexican American."[13]

Who Selects "White" and Who Selects "Some Other Race"?

Determining who selects a particular racial category is complicated by several factors: the instability of Latino racial response across surveys, the heterogeneity of the Latino population resulting from aggregation across national origin groups and immigrant generations, and high intermarriage rates for native-born Latinos. In an analysis of 1990 Census data, one study hypothesized that Hispanics reporting "some other race" were unfamiliar with the common understanding of race in the United States. Thus,

Over half of respondents volunteered or preferred a racial response of "Hispanic or Latino." Another 20 percent preferred white, and 20 percent preferred another option.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nativity is a significant factor but does not entirely explain patterns of racial identification.

the expectation was that these respondents would be more likely to be foreign-born and to have limited English skills and education (Rodriguez, 2000). However, the findings and other analyses indicate that these factors were not consistently associated with the choice "some other race" (Bates et al., 1995).

These inconsistencies may be related to the difficulty in identifying immigrant generation in these data. For example, a demographic profile of California Latinos taken from the 1990 Census illustrates that, compared to native-born Latinos, noncitizens and the foreign-born in general were more likely to identify as "some other race" than as white (Table 1). Yet when the analysis is limited to native-born Latinos, the share of respondents who identify as white rises by only 3.4 percent. Thus, nativity is a significant factor but does not entirely explain patterns of racial identification.[14]

Table 1 also shows the change in median age between Latinos as

Table 1. Selected Sociodemographic Characteristics of California Latinos by Race, 1990

	Racial Identification			
	All Latinos		Native-Born Latinos	
	Some Other Race	White	Some Other Race	White
No. (unweighted)	191,028	168,481	97,295	100,478
Percentage of sample	51	45.7	46.8	49.1
Median age	23	25	14	18
Female	47.8	48.7	49.5	50.1
Foreign-born	49.2	40.7	NA	NA
Noncitizen	40.1	32.3	NA	NA
Mexican origin	82.9	79	88.2	81.3
High school graduate or higher	40.6	50	62.7	69.0
Associate degree or higher	8.2	12.8	12.2	17.2
Bachelor's degree or higher	3.9	7.6	5.8	10.2
Speaks English not well or not at all	29	23.3	6.6	4.7
Receiving public assistance	5.5	4.9	7.7	5.8
Not working (males ages 18–65)	23.4	24.8	30.8	27.2

Source: Author's calculations from the 1990 PUMS. Means are calculated with weighted data.
Notes: All mean differences of characteristics between racial groups for all Latinos and for native-born Latinos are significant at the 95 percent level, except share of females among native-born Latinos. Public assistance is defined as receipt of any public assistance income in the prior year. Not working includes those out of the labor force and unemployed persons.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a whole and native-born Latinos. The lower median ages among the native-born result from the presence of many native-born children of immigrants, who are generally assigned a race by the parent who completes the Census form for the family. Because the Census does not ask about the birthplace of the respondent's parents in addition to the birthplace of the respondent, tabulations for children of Latino immigrants are calculable only for children living with both parents. Data for these children show that among Latino children with two foreign-born parents, 58 percent are identified as "some other race." In contrast, among Latino children with two native-born parents, only 41 percent were identified this way.[15] These results provide limited evidence for the hypothesis that longer exposure to the racial categories used in the United States results in fewer "some other race" responses.

The issue of immigrant generation can be more easily explored using a dataset in which adult respondents are asked the birthplaces of their parents. The 2001 California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), although smaller in scale than the 1990 PUMS, has the advantage of both being more recent and soliciting parental birthplace.[16] Table 2 illustrates the profiles of adults from this dataset. As in the PUMS 1990 data, limiting the analysis to native-born Latinos reduces the share of "some

Table 2. Selected Sociodemographic Characteristics of California Latinos by Race, 2001

	Racial Identification			
	All Latinos		Native-Born Latinos	
	Some Other Race	White	Some Other Race	White
No. (unweighted)	6,264	4,377	2,068	2,217
Percentage of sample	57.6	36.1	47.8	42.1
Median age	33	35	29	36
Female	47.7	54.8	47.2	55
Foreign-born	67.9	54.9	NA	NA
Noncitizen	47.1	36.9	NA	NA
Mexican origin	76.1	65.5	69.9	57.1
High school graduate or higher	56.6	64.9	82.4	86
Associate degree or higher	13.1	19.5	23.5	29.5
Bachelor's degree or higher	8.1	13.4	13	19.8
Speaks English not well or not at all	26	20.6	NA	NA
Receiving public assistance	18.5	16.7	9.3	14.5
Not working (males ages 18–65)	14	14.4	19.5	16.4

Source: Author's calculations from the 2001 CHIS. Means are calculated with weighted data.
Notes: Public assistance includes Aid to Families with Dependent Children; Temporary Aid for Needy Families; Cal Works; Housing Subsidies; General Assistance; General Relief; Food Stamps; Women, Infants, and Children; Supplemental Security Income; and Social Security Disability. Mean differences between race groups are significant at the 95 percent level for all Latinos and for native-born Latinos, except for males ages 18–65 not working.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Longer exposure to the nation's racial categorization system results in a lower selection rate for the "some other race" category.

other race" responses, but that share is still relatively high (48 percent).

The relationship between immigrant generation and racial identity is illustrated in Table 3. For second-generation adult respondents—that is, native-born residents of immigrant parents—64 percent identify as "some other race." Among third and subsequent generations of adult Latinos, only 37 percent do so (Table 3). These results provide further evidence that longer exposure to the nation's racial categorization system results in a lower selection rate for the "some other race" category. However, the fact that 37 percent of adults of third and subsequent generations select "some other race" suggests that these respondents are familiar with the nation's conventional racial categories but do not believe that they reflect their notions of racial identity.

Bound up with the issue of immigrant generation is the propensity for intermarriage, which may explain some of the tendency of native-born Latinos to identify as white. Intermarriage rates between non-Hispanic whites and Hispanics are relatively high and increase with immigrant generation.[17] Table 4 shows the racial identification for California Latino children with differing parental combinations. In 1990, only 15 percent of native-born Latino children had one Latino parent and one non-Latino white parent.[18] Among children with one Latino and one non-Latino white parent, 75 percent were identified as Hispanic and white.[19] These data show that the intermarriage of Latinos and non-Hispanic whites results in children who are largely identified as white. In this dataset, however, most native-born Latino children (85 percent) had

Table 3. Racial Identity of California Latinos by Nativity of Parents, 2001

Parental Pair	Racial Identification	
	Some Other Race	White
Native-Born:Native-Born	419,789 (37)	576,379 (50.8)
Native-Born:Foreign-Born	244,875 (44.1)	252,258 (45.4)
Foreign-Born:Foreign Born	551,194 (64)	252,331 (29.3)

Source: Author's calculations from the 2001 CHIS (CHIS, 2002).
Note: Percentages are in parentheses.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

two Latino parents, and the majority (57 percent) of these native-born children were identified as some other race. Thus, intermarriage rates between Latinos and non-Latino whites are relatively high, but most Latino children in 1990 had two Latino parents. Furthermore, although out-marriage among Latinos is now relatively high, increasing group size tends to be inversely related to out-marriage. Thus, the growth of California's Latino population in both absolute and relative terms may result in a larger share of in-marriage among Latinos and thus more children identified as "some other race."

Finally, national origin is another factor related to Latino racial identity. Table 5 shows the racial identification of Latinos by national origin group across three surveys. The preferences for a white racial category are consistent across surveys, even though the absolute values vary. Mexican- and Central American–origin groups, the largest groups in California, show the lowest preference for a white identification in each survey. Furthermore, national origin and immigrant generation do not act independently. If Latino immigrants are more heavily skewed toward Central American–origin groups who are more likely to select "some other race," their generational progression out of the "some other race" category may proceed more slowly.

Table 4. Racial Identification and Nativity of Latino Children by Parental Pair Type, 1990

Parental Pair	Some Other Race Native-Born	White Native-Born	Some Other Race Foreign-Born	White Foreign-Born	Total
Latino:Latino	717,132 (42)	530,784 (31)	275,630 (16)	182,012 (11)	1,705,558 (100)
Latino:Non-Latino White	49,719 (21)	173,451 (75)	1,923 (1)	6,334 (3)	231,427 (100)
Total	766,851	704,235	277,553	188,346	1,936,985

Source: Author's calculations from the 1990 PUMS.
Notes: Includes only children living with both parents. Percentages are in parentheses.

Table 5. Percentage of White Latinos by National Origin and Survey

	Survey Instrument		
	Pew 2002	CHIS 2001	PUMS 1990
Cuban	55	NA	66
South American	29	51	61
Puerto Rican	19	42	50
Mexican	17	33	46
Central American	14	28	38

Notes: Data are California-specific for all surveys except Pew 2002. The table shows only national origin groups for which all surveys have consistent groups. CHIS did not include the Cuban subgroup. The Pew instrument surveyed the "white" racial response as opposed to a racial response of "Latino or Hispanic." CHIS and PUMS responses were to race and ethnic questions using standard categories.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Almost 6 million Californians departed from the federal government's racial categories by selecting "some other race." Of these respondents, 99 percent were Latinos.

Implications and Conclusions

To date, the divergence between federal racial categories and Latino racial identification has been obscured by the presence of two separate questions on most surveys: one about Hispanic origin and one about racial identification. For policy purposes, the racial identity of Latinos is relatively unimportant because the ethnicity question provides an unambiguous way to identify Latinos. For example, if a civil rights plaintiff claims that he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of his or her Hispanic origin, the relevant baseline data in such a case would be Census data on Hispanic origin irrespective of racial identification (Persily, 2002).[20] Even so, the federal standards depend to some degree on public perceptions of race and racial difference.

Historically, when social realities were not adequately reflected in the standard racial categories, the government expanded its categories. For example, government officials appended "Hindu" to the list of racial categories in 1920 and "Mexican" in 1930. In other cases, changes have been the result of political pressure. For example, protests of the 1930 insertion of "Mexican" as a race resulted in its subsequent removal. More recently, a petition from multiracial activists resulted in the allowance of multiple race responses.

The current situation is quite different. Almost 6 million Californians departed from the federal government's racial categories by selecting "some other race." Of these respondents, 99 percent were Latinos. In effect, this pattern of response converted the residual "some other race" category into a de facto Latino racial category. This conversion occurred not because of administrative need; indeed, the Hispanic ethnicity question satisfies all legal mandates. Nor did it take place because Latinos petitioned the government for change. Rather, it emerged spontaneously from a subset of Americans whose racial perceptions differed from those codified by the federal government. In the long run, this pattern of response may lead to changes in the federal government's racial and ethnic classification system. ◆

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Notes

[1] Public Law 94-311, June 16, 1976. See "Standards for Maintaining, Collecting and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity" (1997).

[2] Throughout most of the nineteenth century, the term "color" was used rather than "race" (Rodriguez, 2000).

[3] Before 1997, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders were grouped under the umbrella category of Asian and Pacific Islander.

[4] Sixty-nine percent of the Latinos who selected two or more races chose "white" and "some other race" according to the Census 2000 SF1 file.

[5] As the C2SS documentation explains: "The Census 2000 Supplementary Survey was a Decennial Census program designed to demonstrate the feasibility of collecting long form type information at the same time as, but separate from, the Decennial Census. It used the questionnaire and methods developed for the American Community Survey to collect demographic, social, economic, and housing data from a national sample of 700,000 households in 1,203 counties. Group quarters were not included in the sample" (C2SS, 2000).

[6] The Census Bureau evaluated the quality of the 1990 Census data on race and ethnicity using the 1990 Census Content Reinterview Study.

[7] Edmonston and Schultze (1995), Appendix L.

[8] See Chapa (2000) for a discussion of the 1930 Census race question.

[9] As of March 2003 DOF has begun to classify Latinos by race in its population estimates.

[10] See the allocation rules at www.avss.ucsb.edu/lists.htm.

[11] Pew Hispanic Center and Kaiser Family Foundation (2002).

[12] Among those who preferred another option, 6 percent preferred Mexican or Mexican American, 4 percent identified as "other" and wanted the racial question deleted from the Census schedule, and the remaining 10 percent simply selected "other."

[13] Among Mexican-origin respondents, 58 percent preferred Hispanic or Latino, 17 percent preferred white, 10 percent preferred Mexican or Mexican American, and 15 percent preferred another racial option or did not know which racial identifier they preferred.

[14] Tests of significance for mean differences in share foreign-born and share noncitizen are highly significant between those who identify as "some other race" and those who identify as white.

[15] Source: Author's calculations from the 1990 PUMS.

[16] As the CHIS documentation explains: "The 2001 California Health Interview Survey (CHIS 2001) is a collaborative project of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, the California Department of Health Services, and the Public Health Institute. The focus of the survey is on a variety of public health topics including access to health care and health insurance coverage. CHIS 2001 is the largest state health survey ever undertaken in the United States. It is a random digit dial (RDD) telephone survey of California households designed to produce reliable estimates for the whole state, for large and medium-sized population counties in the state, and for groups of the smallest population counties. Three California cities that have their own health departments were also sampled as part of CHIS 2001" (California Health Interview Survey, 2002). The Current Population Survey (1994–2000) also asks respondents to give their parents' place of birth. However, their ethnicity question differs from the Hispanic ethnicity question used in the PUMS and the CHIS.

[17] Intermarriage refers to the choice of a marital partner from outside one's racial or ethnic group. National intermarriage rates for Latinos by immigrant generation are 0.08 for the first generation, 0.32 for the second generation, and 0.57 for the third generation (Smith and Edmonston, 1997).

[18] This percentage is derived by summing the first two columns of the second row of Table 4 and dividing by the total.

[19] Source: Author's calculations from the 1990 PUMS.

[20] If, as some have advocated, the Hispanic origin question is combined with the race question to form a more general "origins" question, the policy results will be more complicated, since there will be several ways to determine who should be legally included in the Latino group. For example, would it include only respondents who selected a Latino origin exclusively, or would those who select Latino origin as well as another origin also be included?

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bibliography

Anderson, Margo J., *The American Census: A Social History*, Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut, 1988.

Bates, Nancy A., Elizabeth A. Martin, Theresa J. De Maio, and Manuel de la Puente, "Questionnaire Effects on Measurement of Race and Spanish Origin," *Journal of Official Statistics*, Vol. 11, 1995, pp. 433–459.

California Health Interview Survey, "CHIS 2001 Adult Public Use File, Release 2" (computer file), UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, Los Angeles, California, July 2002.

Census of Population and Housing, "1990: Public Use Microdata Samples U.S." (machine-readable data files) prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C., 1992.

Census 2000 Supplementary Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C., 2000, available at http://www.census.gov/acs/www/.

Chapa, Jorge, "Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity and Identifiers," in Margo J. Anderson (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the U.S. Census*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C., 2000.

Choldin, Harvey, M., "Statistics and Politics: The 'Hispanic Issue' in the 1980 Census," *Demography*, Vol. 23, No. 3, August 1986.

Edmonston, Barry, and Charles Schultze (eds.), *Modernizing the U.S. Census*, National Academy Press, Washington, D.C., 1995.

Graham, Hugh Davis, "The Origins of Official Minority Designation," in Joel Perlman and Mary C. Waters (eds.), *The New Race Question: How the Census Counts Multiracial Individuals*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2002.

Guzman, Betsy, "The Hispanic Population," *Census 2000 Brief*, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C., May 2001.

Hirschman, Charles, Richard Alba, and Reynolds Farley, "The Meaning and Measurement of Race in the U.S. Census: Glimpses into the Future," *Demography*, Vol. 37, No. 3, August 2000, pp. 381–393.

"Just the Facts: Immigrants in California," Public Policy Institute of California, San Francisco, California, July 2002.

McKenney, Nampeo, Claudette Bennett, Roderick Harrison, and Jorge del Pinal, "Evaluating Racial and Ethnic Reporting in the 1990 Census," presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Statistical Association, *1993 Proceedings of the Section on Survey Research Methods*, Vol. 1, 1993.

Nobles, Melissa, *Shades of Citizenship Race and the Census in Modern Politics*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 2000.

Perlman, Joel, and Mary C. Waters, "Introduction," in Joel Perlman and Mary C. Waters (eds.), *The New Race Question: How the Census Counts Multiracial Individuals*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2002.

Persily, Nathaniel, "The Legal Implications of a Multiracial Census," in Joel Perlman and Mary C. Waters (eds.), *The New Race Question: How the Census Counts Multiracial Individuals*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2002.

Pew Hispanic Center and Kaiser Family Foundation *2002 National Survey of Latinos*, Washington, D.C., and Menlo Park, California, December 2002.

Prewitt, Kenneth, "Race in the 2000 Census: A Turning Point," in Joel Perlman and Mary C. Waters (eds.), *The New Race Question: How the Census Counts Multiracial Individuals*, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 2002.

"Recommendations from the Interagency Committee for the Review of the Racial and Ethnic Standards to the Office of Management and Budget Concerning Changes to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity," *Federal Register*, July 9, 1997.

Rodriguez, Clara E., *Changing Race Latinos, the Census, and the History of Ethnicity in the United States*, New York University Press, New York, 2000.

Smith, James P., and Barry Edmonston (eds.), *The New Americans: Economic, Demographic, and Fiscal Effects of Immigration*, National Academy Press, Washington, D.C., 1997.

"Standards for the Classification of Federal Data Race and Ethnicity; Notice," *Federal Register*, August 28, 1995.

"Standards for Maintaining, Collecting and Presenting Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity," Appendix A, *Federal Register*, October 30, 1997.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Board of Directors

Raymond L. Watson, Chair
Vice Chairman of the Board
The Irvine Company

William K. Coblentz
Partner
Coblentz, Patch, Duffy & Bass, LLP

Edward K. Hamilton
Chairman
Hamilton, Rabinovitz & Alschuler, Inc.

Walter B. Hewlett
Director
Center for Computer Assisted
Research in the Humanities

David W. Lyon
President and CEO
Public Policy Institute of California

Cheryl White Mason
Chief, Civil Liability Management
Office of the City Attorney
Los Angeles, California

Arjay Miller
Dean Emeritus
Graduate School of Business
Stanford University

Ki Suh Park
Design and Managing Partner
Gruen Associates

A. Alan Post
Former State Legislative Analyst
State of California

Constance L. Rice
Co-Director
The Advancement Project

Thomas C. Sutton
Chairman & CEO
Pacific Life Insurance Company

Cynthia A. Telles
Department of Psychiatry
UCLA School of Medicine

Carol Whiteside
President
Great Valley Center

Harold M. Williams
President Emeritus
The J. Paul Getty Trust
and
Of Counsel
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

The Public Policy Institute of California is a private, nonprofit research organization established in 1994 with an endowment from William R. Hewlett. The Institute conducts independent, objective, nonpartisan research on the economic, social, and political issues affecting Californians. The Institute's goal is to raise public awareness of these issues and give elected representatives and other public officials in California a more informed basis for developing policies and programs. PPIC does not take or support positions on any ballot measure or state and federal legislation nor does it endorse or support any political parties or candidates for public office.

PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA
500 Washington Street, Suite 800 • San Francisco, California 94111
Telephone: (415) 291-4400 • Fax: (415) 291-4401 • www.ppic.org

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Public Policy Institute of California

California Counts **Latinos and Racial Identification in California**

Recent issues of

California Counts

POPULATION TRENDS AND PROFILES

Maturity Before Maternity: Teen Birth Rates in California

California's Young Children: Demographic, Social, and Economic Conditions

Who's Your Neighbor? Residential Segregation and Diversity in California

A State of Diversity: Demographic Trends in California's Regions

The Linguistic Landscape of California Schools

At Home and in School: Racial and Ethnic Gaps in Educational Preparedness

Check One or More . . . Mixed Race and Ethnicity in California

are available free of charge on PPIC's website
www.ppic.org

PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA
500 Washington Street, Suite 800
San Francisco, California 94111

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BRISBANE, CA
PERMIT #83

In This Issue

Conceptualizing Race

California's Latino Population

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED